(b) if so, what are the commodities which have potential for trade in these countries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) All five Central Asian Republics, namely, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkemnistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrghyzstan, have, in their various contacts with us including at the highest level, repeatedly conveyed their desire to encourage and promote bilateral trade with India.

(b) Potential for trade with these countries exists for a large variety of commodities. Major items that could be exported from India include all varieties of consumer goods, tea, agricultural commodities, pesticides, pharmaceuticals and engineering goods including project export. Main items with potential for import from these countries are minerals including crude oil, liquified natural gas and non-ferrous metals, raw hides and skins, cotton and wool.

2355. [*Transferred to 18th March, 1993.*]

Representation from Tamil Nadu Tanners, Exporters and Importers Association

2356. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the Tamil Nadu Tanners, Exporters and Importers Association about their difficulties arising out of the Government's ban on lighter shade of leather; and

(b) if so, what are the steps taken by Government to remove the difficulties of the small and medium scale leather tanners?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Introduction of free trade in Indian Econoym

2357. DR. ISHWAR CHANDRA GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of advantages to Indian Economy by introduction of free trade;

(b) what are the details of its impact on indigenous items for which free trade has been allowed;

(c) what are the view of big industrialists on the ree trade policy; and

(d) wfhether the idea of free trade

(d) whether the idea of free trade policy has been conceived under the dictates of the U.S. dominated World Bank and I.M.F.?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The liberal trade policy of the Government would facilitate easy availability of imported raw materials, intermediates, components consumables and capital goods from the international market. This would in turn, help to promote the productivity, modernisation and competitiveness of Indian industry and thereby enhance its export capabilities.

(b) Since the announcement of the new Export-Import Policy, exports have shown a higher growth rate of 3.4 per cent in April-December 1992 as compare to a negative growth rate of 3.7 per cent during April-December 1991. Similarly, the Negative growth of 0.1 per cent experienced in industrial production during 1991-92 has been reversed and during April-November, 1992 for which data is available so far, industrial production has recorded a growth rate of 3.9 per cent compare to the corresponding period of last year.